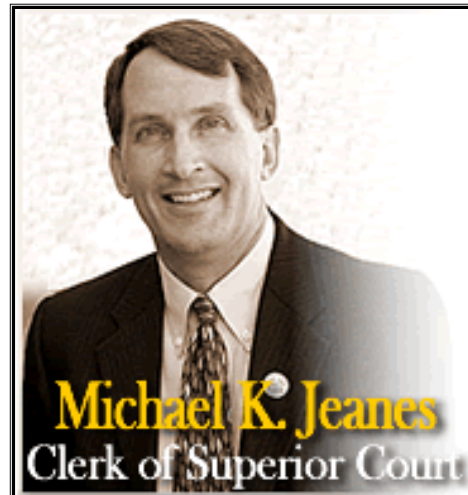


Strategic Plan

FY2010-2012



Strategic Planning Division

Clerk of the Superior Court in Maricopa County

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CLERK'S MESSAGE

I am pleased to present the Clerk's Office Strategic Plan for FY2010-2012. The intent of this Plan is to communicate the strategic direction for the Clerk's Office through the identification of issues facing our organization and the specific goals put in place to overcome those issues. Documenting a strategic direction is particularly important at this time given the growing financial pressures facing Maricopa County and the State of Arizona. The phrase "Do more with less" has become the harsh reality for our organization; however, through a continued focus on results for our customers and effective utilization of our resources – both personnel and technology – we will pursue aggressive goals and make necessary adjustments to meet our current and foreseeable challenges.

Significant Accomplishments

The Clerk's Office accomplished many goals outlined in our Strategic Plan for 2006-2008, leading to improved customer service, enhanced access to court documents, and overall cost reductions for operational and technical processes. In that Plan, I outlined a vision to achieve greater results and efficiencies through the strict focus on several key priorities and goals, including the implementation of the Electronic Court Record (ECR) and replacement of a legacy financials system.

I am pleased to report that we reached our goal to adopt and maintain the ECR as the official court record on January 1, 2007. Today, it is no longer necessary for the Clerk to store and maintain paper files for Adult case types filed on and after January 2, 2002. Results from this accomplishment include:

- For the calendar year 2008, the Clerk's Office destroyed 2,483,211 documents filed after 1/1/07 that would otherwise be stored in paper files
- As of September 2009, the Clerk's Office audited and destroyed previously imaged Family Court (with children) files from calendar year 2002, representing 19,182 files, and calendar year 2003 representing 21,548 files
- To date, the Clerk's Office imaged, audited and destroyed 54,059 Family Court (no children) files for the years 2002-2006
- For the calendar year 2008, compared to calendar year 2007, electronic filings grew by 53% in Criminal cases and 37.7% in Civil cases

Despite decreased funding, an extended hiring freeze, staffing shortages, and increased workload, the Clerk's Office created efficiency through the implementation of several key projects. These projects were targeted to expand access to court records, improve customer satisfaction and reduce operating costs. Each of these projects was possible, in part, through the implementation of the ECR. Significant accomplishments include:

ECR Online – A web based application developed by the Clerk's Office, in cooperation with the Clerk's electronic document management system provider, to allow attorneys and parties to access the documents for cases in which they are a party or attorney of record. From January 2009 to September 2009, utilization of ECR Online has increased over 60 percent.

Orders of Assignment – A new automated application developed by the Clerk's Information Technology Group (ITG) for the implementation of a new Orders of Assignment (OOA) process. This project has provided tremendous results to Family Court customers by expediting support order processing, and substantial operational savings have been realized through streamlining and automating the associated processes. Orders of Assignment for Child Support and/or Spousal Maintenance are now processed more timely, with fewer errors and less staff. Recent reports demonstrate that an average of 60 percent of all OOAs are mailed to the employer/payor of funds within 10 business days, as compared to just 27 percent of the Orders prior to implementation of the OOA application.

Permissive eFiling – On December 1, 2008, through Administrative Order No. 2008-89, eFiling became 'permissive' for licensed attorneys and parties filing documents in Civil cases. They may eFile according to the Clerk's eFiling Guidelines, without a mandate or designation from the Court. In support of this initiative, ITG developed and implemented several technical improvements to the existing eFiling system to ensure proper service levels and automation support.

In addition to projects supporting the advancement of the ECR, the Clerk's Office completed several initiatives targeted to improve support for the Clerk's responsibility as the fiduciary agent for the Superior Court.

Financial Systems – During FY2009, the Financial Services Division of the Clerk’s Office, supported by ITG, implemented the replacement of the Clerk’s billing system and supported the requirements development for the replacement Restitution, Fines, and Reimbursement (RFR) system under development by the Superior Court’s information technology division.

Cash Receipting System Replacement – ITG completed the development of the Clerk’s new Cash Receipting application, replacing the existing system with an improved system built on the latest technology platform. The new system was deployed into production on September 14, 2009.

Current and Foreseeable Challenges

Budget reductions clearly represent a significant challenge for our Office. Through the necessary implementation of several budget reductions in response to the current financial crisis, the Office eliminated nearly 90 positions in the previous two fiscal years and brought the staffing level back to the same level as FY2004-05. During that same period, demand for our services has continued to grow. New Civil cases filed grew by 28.9 percent from FY2006-07 to FY2007-08 and Criminal filings grew by 8.7 percent in the same time period.

This growth, combined with declining resources, continues to challenge our ability to meet and maintain service expectations of our customers and to limit our ability to invest in long term efficiencies achieved through implementation of cost saving process improvement and automation initiatives. Now, more than ever, a strict focus on priorities and goals is necessary to work within these constraints to make the necessary improvements for our customers and for our organization.

Another significant challenge I expect to face and address in the future is our customers’ expectations to have greater access to public documents while protecting sensitive information. National trends show that the demand for improved access to the Courts and court documents is rising, as is the concern over the protection of personal information and identity theft. Providing public access to court information is essential; equally essential is the need to assure that the information from those who become involved in the court process will not be misused, that their safety will not be compromised and that their privacy will be respected.

Direction/Goals

We will continue our focus on planning to ensure the most valuable initiatives are qualified and implemented strategically. A critical path to support continued growth with declining resources will involve a strict focus on employee development and retention, strategic budget development and maintenance, the continued advancement of eFiling and the ECR, and targeted investment in information technology solutions to create the greatest business value – measured through customer service improvements and cost reductions – across the entire organization.

As an organization and as a team, this Office will take responsibility to deliver the goals set forth in this plan. Although we continue to face major economic and financial hurdles, together we will work to make the Clerk's Office an employer of choice, a progressive example of outstanding customer service delivery, a valuable and contributing stakeholder within the Judicial community, and a cost effective/financially responsible organization within Maricopa County.

Sincerely,

Michael K. Jeanes

Clerk of the Superior Court in Maricopa County

STRATEGIC PLAN – AT A GLANCE

Listed below is a summary view of the priorities and goals for the Clerk’s Office. Further detail for each priority and supporting goals may be viewed in the following sections.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY: ELECTRONIC COURT RECORD

The Clerk of the Superior Court will adopt, maintain, and expand the utilization of the Electronic Court Record (ECR) as the official record for Adult and Juvenile case types.

Expansion of eFiling

Audit & Destruction of 2002-2006 Imaged Documents

Establishment of Juvenile ECR

Inactive Case Imaging

STRATEGIC PRIORITY: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The Clerk of the Superior Court, as the statutory fiduciary of the Superior Court, will implement and maintain financial processes that support a unified approach to eGovernment, and provide for the timely and accurate collection, disbursement, and reporting of court ordered payments.

eGovernment

STRATEGIC PRIORITY: EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT

The Clerk of Superior Court will foster high levels of employee satisfaction through the development and implementation of initiatives that address employee recruitment, training, development, and retention.

Employee Recruitment/Retention

CLERK'S OFFICE DESCRIPTION

Prior to being elected to the Office of the Clerk of Superior Court in November 1998, Michael K. Jeanes served the office for nearly eleven years as an executive manager, first as an Associate Clerk and then as the appointed Clerk of Court. He is currently fulfilling his third four-year term as the Clerk, responsible for leading more than 625 employees, supporting 157 judges and commissioners, and serving a constituency of over four million people living in one of the largest and fastest growing counties in the nation.

The primary duties of the Clerk of Court are to be the official record keeper and fiduciary agent for the Superior Court. More than 500 state statutes and court rules apply to functions performed by the Clerk's Office. Among the services provided are:

- ❖ Establish the court record for any Superior Court action in civil, criminal, mental health, probate, tax, and family court matters, as well as for juvenile cases which include delinquency, dependency, adoption, and severance matters.
- ❖ Receive, distribute and preserve official court documents
- ❖ Provide public access to the records of the Superior Court in Maricopa County
- ❖ Attend each Superior Court session to record the actions of the court
- ❖ Store exhibits for all Superior Court cases
- ❖ Collect and disburse court-ordered fees, fines and victim restitution
- ❖ Provide various family support services to the public
- ❖ Issue and record marriage licenses
- ❖ Process passport applications

MISSION

The **Mission** of the Clerk of the Superior Court is to provide progressive and efficient court-related records management and financial services for the justice system, legal community, and public so they have fair and timely access to accurate court records and services.

VISION

The **Vision** of the Clerk of the Superior Court is to anticipate, meet, and exceed the expectations of our customers.

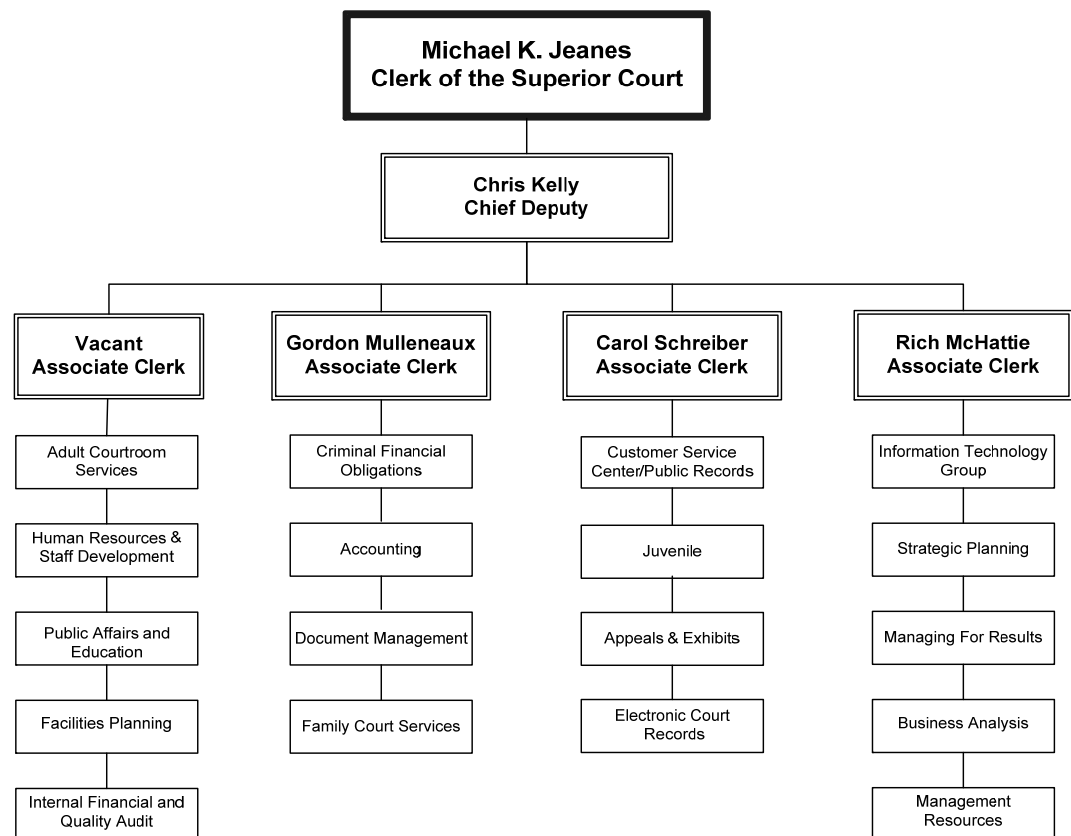
VALUES

- Customer Service:** Providing quality service to our customers, with understanding and respect, in a timely manner.
- Employees:** Creating a healthy environment in which employees are involved, respected, challenged, encouraged, appreciated and given opportunity for development.
- Efficiency:** Using well-chosen resources effectively and making fiscally responsible decisions based on facts and employee input.
- Ethics:** Exemplifying the highest standards of integrity and professionalism.
- Justice:** Promoting the impartial administration of the justice system.

PLANNING PROCESS

As described in the Clerk's Message, we achieved major accomplishments related to goals and objectives identified in our 2006-2008 Strategic Plan. A review of progress made by mid-2008 verified that the 2006-2008 Strategic Plan was mostly fulfilled. Our Strategic Priorities remained valid, yet new issues impacting the office, coupled with increasing customer needs requiring technological solutions, indicated it was time to update our strategic plan.

The organizational chart below shows that the Clerk's Office has a dedicated Strategic Planning unit, Managing for Results (MFR) unit, and Management Resources unit – which includes the budget staff. The three groups work together to ensure our performance management program successfully supports the organizational structure and budgeted operations of the Clerk's Office and enhances our ability to attain our goals. More information about Managing for Results is provided in the next section of this document.



The Clerk, Chief Deputy, Associate Clerks and their Administrators participated in the planning process through a series of planning sessions targeted to elicit major issues and trends affecting each Division of the Clerk's Office for the next two to three years. Each session was customer centric and sought to clarify and document data driven issues and goals.

Three focal points arose that drove the planning process:

1. Plan the plan. Utilize project management methodologies.
2. Communicate with stakeholders frequently.
3. Incorporate Managing for Results philosophy and requirements into the Strategic Plan.

The Strategic Planning team prepared a work schedule, posting it and periodic status updates to a Microsoft Office Project Web Access 2003 site (PWA) established as a means of communicating with stakeholders about the strategic plan project. Project documents, such as draft issue statements and goals, were posted to the PWA site.

The major milestones of our planning process were to:

1. Obtain Michael K. Jeanes' vision for the future of the office
2. Conduct environmental assessments and identification of strategic issues with the Chief Deputy, each Associate Clerk, and Administrators
3. Prepare Issue Statements, in MFR format
4. Identify Strategic Goals and document them
5. Tie Strategic Issues and Goals to MFR elements
6. Obtain Clerk's, Chief Deputy's, Associate Clerks' and other stakeholders' approval of the plan
7. Compile the approved plan in a marketable format(s)
8. Distribute the FY2010 – 2012 Strategic Plan to target audiences

A special acknowledgement goes out to MFR Facilitator Kirk Jaeger and Principle Budget Analyst Scott Rothe, both from Maricopa County's Office of Management and Budget, who participated as consultants and facilitators of several brainstorming sessions to help advance the development of our Plan.

MANAGING FOR RESULTS

Strategic Planning is just one step in the cycle of integrated management processes that comprise Maricopa County's and the Clerk's Managing for Results approach to meeting the needs of our customers. The graphic below identifies the key MFR processes and paints a pictorial understanding of the interdependence of planning, budgeting, analyzing and improving performance for the benefit of our customers.



Because of the integral nature of MFR components, careful attention was given to how well our business Programs, Activities and Services (PAS) align to and support our Strategic Priorities and Goals (Planning for Results phase). The PAS structure defines the services we provide, with similar services being grouped as an Activity, and defines how we measure the Results for each Activity. A Result is customer focused, assessing a benefit of our service that is derived by the customer, such as timely delivery of a service.

The MFR Program provides guidelines and various preparation tools that, when used, help to develop and maintain a customer focused management strategy. Proper alignment of various MFR elements - goals to issues, Activities to goals, and employees' goals to Strategic Priorities - is crucial to the Clerk's Office success in delivering services needed by our customers and in meeting or exceeding the service standards expected by our customers.

PRIORITIES, GOALS, AND STRATEGIES

Three strategic priorities describe the forward direction of the Clerk's Office and guide its operating Divisions as they develop and pursue performance goals that align with one or more of these strategic priorities. Goals take our organization above and beyond our day to day operations and take the services we provide above and beyond our customers' expectations. Alignment of Clerk's Office strategic priorities and goals to operational and performance strategies is a key element of Managing for Results.

Definitions –

- Priority:** *something given special attention; precedence, especially established by order of importance or urgency.*
- Goal:** *the result or achievement toward which effort is directed; aim; end.*
- Strategy:** *a plan, method, or series of maneuvers or stratagems for obtaining a specific goal or result*

The following graphic illustrates the linkage between Strategic Priorities and Strategic Goals:



The core priority areas that constitute the focus of our strategic planning are the **Electronic Court Record**, **Financial Management**, and **Employee Development**. The following sections define each strategic priority and an issue that is a significant inhibitor to achieving the intent of the priority. Each issue has at least one strategic goal listed that is designed to address the issue and promote the strategic priority. A brief discussion of planned business strategies and automation solutions provides information about what the Clerk's Office plans to do in order to accomplish our goals and mitigate or eliminate the issue.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY: ELECTRONIC COURT RECORD

The Clerk of the Superior Court will adopt, maintain, and expand the utilization of the Electronic Court Record (ECR) as the official record for Adult and Juvenile case types.

Issue Statement

Continued reliance on paper based filing services (95.2 percent of adult filings and 100 percent of Juvenile filings are still initiated in paper format) imposes unnecessary costs and delays for attorneys and other parties filing court documents and challenges our ability to meet the service expectations of our customers to conduct business in an electronic and efficient manner.

Documents are filed with the Clerk of Superior Court in various ways. Today, the majority of documents filed with the Clerk are still filed in paper through several different means including submission at our filing counters, filing with a courtroom clerk in the courtroom, or dropped off in one of the Clerk's secure depository boxes.

Each paper filing represents a significant cost to the judiciary as a whole – in staff time and equipment expenditures – to prepare and image paper documents to provide the fully indexed and complete ECR for the Court and other interested stakeholders. For each paper filing, Clerk's Office staff must sort and prepare each document for scanning, scan and review each document, docket (index) each document in the case management system, perform multiple audits to ensure accuracy of the paper filing to the image of the filing, and then destroy the paper document. This process causes a

significant delay in making the record available to the Court and other interested stakeholders (currently 100 percent of eFiled documents are available within eight business hours, and less than 35 percent of scanned documents are available within 24 business hours).

Moreover, the paper process requires filers to physically submit papers, creating the expense of printing and delivery – through mail or hand delivery to the Court – imposing an unnecessary cost and inconvenience for our customers and a negative impact on our environment. The majority of documents are prepared electronically and then printed – only for the Clerk to then image those paper documents to make them electronic, just as they were when they were created. Customers are demanding that we provide greater access to the Court through the use of more efficient and convenient means such as electronic filing and remote access to documents.

In a recent study, the Clerk’s Electronic Document Management unit determined the cost of processing electronic filings was approximately 40-50 percent less than the cost of imaging paper filings. Additionally, the cost to filers is reduced as they avoid the expense of printing and delivery, and access to the Court is improved through 24/7 access for eFiling documents. Timeliness, in terms of availability of filings to the Court, is on average within eight business hours as opposed to four or more business days to image and docket a paper filing.

In order to advance the utilization of the ECR to expand improved access to court documents and to respond to the demands of our customers, several goals have been identified and defined in the following sections.

ECR: EXPANSION OF eFILING

By June 30, 2012, all parties (100 percent) who file documents in an adult Superior Court case will have access to electronic filing services so they can submit documents as soon as they are prepared and have filed documents available to the court within eight business hours.

The Clerk’s Office currently provides access to eFiling in several case types under authority of Administrative Order 2007-140. The eFiling Guidelines referenced in the Administrative Order provide current information on the requirements for eFiling documents with the Clerk’s Office, as amended from time to time by authority of the Clerk and the Presiding Judge.

Since the Clerk's Office initially implemented eFiling with a LexisNexis pilot program for the Complex Litigation Court in December 2003, we have had tremendous success in expanding eFiling by developing our own application, integrating it with our Electronic Document Management System (EDMS) and the Court's case management system (iCIS), and adhering to the national Electronic Court Filing specification (ECF 3.0) to allow third party Electronic Filing Service Providers to submit filings. With the completion of these initiatives, the Clerk's Office expanded eFiling to the Civil, Criminal, and Family Court case types.

Criminal eFiling

In April of 2005, one Judge and three downtown DUI Commissioners participated in the initial pilot to launch eFiling for the Criminal case type. The Clerk and the Court progressively expanded eFiling starting with Judges located at the Southeast Facility and, in 2006, to all Downtown Criminal calendars assigned to a Judge.

Today, Criminal eFiling is considered permissive in the Criminal DUI Courts and for Criminal Calendars assigned to Judges.

While the Clerk's Office eFiling website is available for private attorneys to eFile in criminal cases, direct integration is also in place to support the high volume of eFilings from the Maricopa County Attorney's Office. This integration is accomplished via the Integrated Criminal Justice Information System (ICJIS) which transmits the document to be eFiled from the County Attorney's case management system to the Clerk's eFiling system for review by an eFile Clerk Review staff member. County Indigent Defense agencies, along with the Clerk's Office and ICJIS, are involved in a similar integration effort to facilitate the electronic exchange of filings from Indigent Defense to the Clerk's Office with completion scheduled for calendar year 2009.

Civil eFiling

eFiling in the Civil case type began in June 2005, with a pilot in Judge Swann's division. This pilot was successful and helped the Clerk's Office identify and resolve business and technical issues prior to expanding. The expansion of eFiling in Civil progressed by adding three to four divisions every few weeks. Participating divisions designated specific cases for mandatory eFiling, and some divisions elected to designate their entire calendar as mandatory eFiling.

eFiling in Civil is currently at permissive status pursuant to the Supreme Court Administrative Order 2008-89 signed on November 6, 2008. Parties involved in Civil cases may choose to eFile pleadings via the Clerk-hosted eFiling Online website or via Wiznet, a qualified eFiling Service Provider, or they may conventionally file their pleadings. The AO also removes the requirement to provide a paper copy of a filing to the division, as this copy is provided automatically through the Clerk's Office eFiling system.

Divisions of the Court may still elect to designate individual cases as mandatory eFiling, thus requiring parties to eFile all subsequent documents on these cases.

Family Court eFiling

In December 2007, the Clerk's Office launched a pilot project for eFiling in Family Court. This pilot involved six divisions - one division from each courthouse location (Downtown, NE, SE, NW). Family Court eFiling is currently at permissive status for cases assigned to divisions participating in the pilot. The number of participating divisions in the pilot has not expanded beyond six divisions due in part to case processing and calendaring complexities and the high number of pro per cases.

Several business strategies have been identified to support the goal of providing access to eFiling services in adult case types for all parties as detailed below:

- Business Strategy 1:** Enhance eFiling education, promotion, and training for all filers and stakeholders to increase awareness and improve user acceptance.
- Business Strategy 2:** Expand full eFiling services – including services for filers to initiate a new case – to all adult case types.
- Business Strategy 3:** Expand eFiling to additional Court departments and Justice and Law Enforcement stakeholders (including Adult Probation, Attorney General, Public Defender) to create larger enterprise efficiency within the judicial community.
- Business Strategy 4:** Pursue an Administrative Order from the Supreme Court for mandatory eFiling for all attorneys.

A necessary and critical component to the Clerk's eFiling Program is the automated eFiling System developed and maintained by the Clerk's Information Technology Group (ITG). This system provides for the submission of eFilings through a web site or, in certain cases, direct integration with IT systems of our stakeholders, such as the County Attorney.

In January 2009, the Administrative Office of the Courts entered into an agreement with a vendor to provide eFiling services for filers and stakeholders. These services are intended to allow filers to eFile documents in any jurisdiction within the State. The Clerk's Office plans to integrate with this new system as services are developed.

Regardless of how a filer chooses to eFile a document, the Clerk's eFiling System supports processing those filings through its existing eFiling system, specifically a Clerk Review and Judicial Review module.

In an effort to improve service and user experience, the Clerk's ITG has initiated the eFiling Foundation Project as an important project necessary to support the continued expansion of eFiling and respond to the changing needs and requirements of our customers.

Automation Solution: eFiling – Foundation – Improve the long term technical foundation for the eFiling system to support multiple integration projects and improve the Clerk's ability to effectively develop enhancements to the application to support the user requirements.

ECR: AUDIT & DESTRUCTION OF 2002-2006 IMAGED DOCUMENTS

By June 30, 2012, the Clerk of Superior Court will complete the audit and destruction of Adult Case files previously imaged for the years 2002-2006.

The majority of paper documents filed between the years 2002-2006, representing 494,000 cases, was imaged prior to the 1/1/07 initiative, which established the ECR as the official adult court record. These images require additional quality assurance to ensure their accuracy and to meet the requirements for destruction as outlined in Supreme Court Administrative Order 2007-77. As part of 1/1/07, these paper files are no longer delivered to the Court due to their availability in the ECR.

In a continuing effort to gain efficiency and improve access to the ECR, as well as increase availability of physical space that could be utilized for other operational purposes, the Clerk's Office will implement several strategies to achieve this goal as follows:

Business Strategy 1: Complete quality assurance audits and ultimate destruction of Family Court case files for the years 2004-2006.

Business Strategy 2: Complete quality assurance audits and ultimate destruction of Transcript of Judgment, Special Warrants, and Tax case files for the years 2002-2006.

Business Strategy 3: Complete the quality assurance audits and ultimate destruction of Small Tax and Lower Court Appeals case files for the years 2002-2006.

ECR: (JUVENILE ECR)

By January 1, 2011, the Clerk of Superior Court will adopt and maintain the Electronic Court Record (ECR) as the official court record for selected Juvenile case types filed on and after January 1, 2011, to provide improved security, management and access to court records for juvenile court stakeholders.

In order to support the establishment of the Juvenile ECR, the Clerk's Office must collaborate with all Juvenile stakeholders to establish the long term goals and expectations for moving the Juvenile Court to an ECR. Much of the Clerk's and Court's experience implementing and maintaining the Adult ECR can be leveraged in considering its approach to developing the Juvenile ECR.

A major milestone in providing electronic record services for Juvenile stakeholders was met with the implementation of Juvenile MEEDS, the minute entry application. Much of Juvenile MEEDS was modeled after Adult MEEDS, which has been operational for numerous years (initially developed in 1996) and includes functionality for automatic electronic distribution of minute entries to endorsees.

Although the Juvenile ECR will mirror various elements of the Adult ECR, a significant difference in approach to building the Juvenile ECR is the assumption that a majority of filings will be submitted electronically, rather than the conversion of most filings from paper documents to an electronic format. Where possible, the scanning effort will be limited at the onset of establishing the Juvenile ECR.

Prior to accepting electronic filings, a repository for those filings will be established. A variety of collaborations and actions will occur with Juvenile stakeholders, as described below, in order to accomplish the Juvenile ECR Strategic Goal.

Business Strategy 1: In collaboration with Juvenile stakeholders, elicit and document detailed business requirements for the Juvenile EDMS (Electronic Document Management System) and eFiling systems.

Business Strategy 2: In collaboration with Juvenile stakeholders, establish and document policies and procedures for the Juvenile ECR.

Business Strategy 3: Obtain formal authority (i.e., Administrative Order or other) to adopt and maintain the Electronic Court Record (ECR) as the official court record for selected Juvenile case types filed on and after January 1, 2011.

The Juvenile ECR represents a distinct set of business processes and automation requirements – separate from the Adult case types. Each must be considered carefully in order to structure the most secure and reliable ECR to meet the specific needs of Juvenile stakeholders. Two substantial projects must be delivered in support of this goal:

Automation Solution: EDMS – Juvenile – Required development of Juvenile-specific EDMS requirements to ensure long-term structure, stability, and security of the Juvenile ECR.

Automation Solution: eFiling – Juvenile – Required enhancements to the eFiling System to meet the documented requirements for the Juvenile case types.

ECR: INACTIVE CASE IMAGING

By December, 2012, the Clerk of Superior Court will leverage resources available from efficiencies gained through eFiling to provide for the imaging of inactive case files to create a fully electronic court record and to meet the requirements for long term storage/disposition.

The Clerk's Office continues to maintain a significant number of official court records in paper media only. There are approximately 518,000 cases in the Clerk's custody that have not been microfilmed for permanent preservation. The oldest case categories date back to 1983. Cases older than 1983 have been microfilmed and disposed of according to statutory requirements.

Historically, microfilming of case files was required to meet the statutory requirements for permanent preservation of official court records. Those requirements include filming, quality control and annual inventory inspection to ensure the film remains at archival quality standards. On November 8, 2006, via Supreme Court AO 2006-96, and again on September 5, 2007, via changes to CR Rule 28.1 and Supreme Court Rule 94(h), the Supreme Court approved electronic documents and images to be acceptable for retention by the Clerk as the official court record. In ongoing work with State Archives, all entities understand that – if necessary – the official record now in the ECR can be reproduced to microfilm for permanent retention.

In December, 2007, the Clerk's Office successfully completed a pilot program whereby almost 80,000 inactive cases were scanned and became available via the EDMS. As such, these scanned documents became the official record and the paper record was destroyed. The success of 1/1/07, as well as necessary budget reductions brought on by the fiscal crisis, led to the elimination of the microfilming process in 2008. The Clerk's Office will leverage the pilot experience and efficiencies gained from its advancement of eFiling to reposition staff to imaging the remaining 518,000 cases.

The achievement of this goal will create greater security of inactive records, allow for simultaneous use by various entities, and represent the preparatory step for electronic transfer of these records to Arizona State Library, Archives and Public Records for permanent retention. The Clerk's Office is currently involved in a pilot with State Archives on the development of a protocol for secure transfer and receipt of electronic records. Destruction of the paper documents imaged as a result of this goal will also provide additional physical space which could be utilized for other operational purposes.

Business Strategy 1: Develop the operations plan to identify priority of case categories to be imaged, project cost, staffing requirements, and potential utilization of outsourcing to augment existing staff.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The Clerk of the Superior Court, as the statutory fiduciary of the Superior Court, will implement and maintain financial processes that support a unified approach to eGovernment, and provide for the timely and accurate collection, disbursement, and reporting of court ordered payments.

Issue Statement

Inability of our legacy financial systems to integrate with or provide modern eGovernment functionality compromises our customers' ability to conduct business with the Clerk in an electronic and efficient manner.

Strategic initiatives implemented over the previous three years have brought the Clerk's Office closer to its vision for online services and eGovernment compatibility. The majority of the Clerk's automated financial applications were developed in the early 1990s with technologies that are now inconsistent with the County and State's current technology path, limiting the Clerk's Office from meeting its strategic goal of creating a unified approach to eGovernment. As a result, over the past few years, the Clerk's Office has initiated strategic initiatives to replace its Billing and Collections application, its General Ledger application, and its Receipting application to conform to County and State technology standards.

On September 14, 2009, the Clerk's office deployed a new Receipting application developed by the Clerk's Office with tools consistent with County and State technology standards. These standards support eGovernment initiatives and interoperability. The application was designed to accept electronic payments and store imaged documents such as checks and identification cards (e.g. driver license, state ID card), as well as capture non-monetary services provided by the Clerk's staff.

FIDUCIARY: EGOVERNMENT

By January 2012, the Clerk's Office will develop and implement enabling technologies to provide our customers with secure access to electronic court financial records and services.

The following strategies will create a foundation for the Clerk of Court to attain and support a unified approach to providing electronic services to our customers and stakeholders.

Automation Solution: The Superior Court and Clerk's Office will develop and implement a replacement application for the Clerk's existing criminal financial obligations (RFR) system. The new application will be tightly coupled with the Court's case management application (iCIS) and will interface with the Clerk's new Receipting application, as well as the Clerk's existing General Ledger accounting application.

Automation Solution: The Clerk's Office will implement a new General Ledger accounting system. This system will interface with the Clerk's new Receipting application and the new RFR application. It will provide the ability to maintain a central check disbursement repository associated to all types of disbursements, thus enhancing the ability to audit all disbursements from all fund accounts (e.g. Fees, RFR, Trust).

Automation Solution: The Clerk's Office will develop and implement a new Trust Deposit application that will maintain all Bond and other asset types ordered to be held by the Clerk's Office until final disposition by the Court. This application will also interface to the General Ledger and the new Receipting application, thus eliminating duplication of data entry and associated entry errors.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY: EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT

The Clerk of Superior Court will foster high levels of employee satisfaction through the development and implementation of initiatives that address employee recruitment, training, development, and retention.

Issue Statement

Uncertainty regarding continued employment caused by decreasing budget allocations (FY07-08 Actual 2.65 percent less than Adopted FY07-08, FY08-09 Adopted Budget 2.4 percent less than FY07-08 Actual Budget) and reductions in force (26 positions, including one Activity in FY08, 58 positions in FY10), challenge the ability to maintain the timeliness and accuracy of service delivery in multiple Activities and Services.

The extended financial crisis facing our County creates much uncertainty and stress for employees. The crisis is projected to last for several years and therefore requires our Office to identify opportunities to address these concerns for our employees and pursue initiatives to enhance our work environment.

The Clerk's Office has already experienced retirement in several key positions, due in part to incentives provided by the County. The Clerk's Office has 10 percent of its employees who will be eligible for retirement within the next two years. With existing staffing shortages caused by previous reductions and a hiring freeze, retaining existing employees and positions is critical to maintaining service expectations. The ability to maintain service levels will only be compounded should many employees decide to retire.

PERSONNEL: RECRUITMENT/RETENTION

By January 31, 2011, Clerk's Office employees will be offered services and work related choices designed to facilitate continuity of their employment, and candidates for employment with the Clerk's Office will have access to information regarding the services and options offered to our employees so they can make an informed decision that the Clerk's Office is an employer of choice.

Job market reports indicate that the current employment opportunities within Arizona are limited and highly competitive. In the near term, this situation helps to ease turnover of existing staff compared to previous fiscal years. However, as the economy improves, and opportunities are created, Clerk's Office employees could pursue other new opportunities, especially given the elimination of performance increases and cost of living adjustments over the past two years.

Under any market conditions, the Clerk's Office strives to be an employer of choice and to create the most favorable environment for its employees. Studies certainly communicate that providing a flexible and comfortable environment improves efficiency and helps to retain employees.

Business Strategy 1: Create a Retention/Succession Working Group, comprised of staff members from all major office divisions and levels of authority, who will revise and update our existing Retention and Succession Plan to meet the challenges posed by existing fiscal and market conditions.

Business Strategy 2: The Retention/Succession Working Group will advise the Clerk's Office senior management team of opportunities for, and feasibility of, implementing several alternative work schedules (e.g., 9/80 Flex, alternative weekly work schedule, telecommuting).

Business Strategy 3: Training and Staff Development will produce a series of informational video programs entitled the "A Day in the Life... Series." These 20-30 minute presentations will detail in a candid, realistic manner the daily duties and activities performed by personnel in major operational areas.

Business Strategy 4: Training and Staff Development will create a Career Management Center. This unit, staffed by Human Resources and Training personnel, will act as a hub for career development information for employees.

Automation Solution Infrastructure – Telecommuting Project – Provide the necessary computing support (i.e. computers, high speed internet access, secure access to applications, application availability) to allow employees to be productive from remote locations.

RELATED RESOURCES

For additional information about the Clerk's Office, please visit the following websites or contact the Clerk's PA&E Division:

- 2006-2008 Strategic Plan
(<http://clerkofcourt.maricopa.gov/news/StrategicPlan.pdf>)
- MFR (<http://www.maricopa.gov/mfr/>)
- Annual Reports (http://www.clerkofcourt.maricopa.gov/news.asp#doing_bu)
- Maricopa County Consolidated Information Technology Plan
(<http://www.supreme.state.az.us/COT/Documents/AJBITSP10/Plans/FY10ITSPMaricopa.pdf>)